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Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General, arriving in Yerevan, meets with President of Armenia; discussion focuses on situation in Nagorny Karabakh.

+ Security Council resolutions and statements represent legal and political basis for solution of Abkhazia problem, Secretary-General says.

+ Special Representative for Mozambique says recent elections were peaceful, well-organized and free of major irregularities; ONUMOZ to remain vigilant pending completion of vote count.

+ Special Representative for Rwanda says security situation in refugee camps in Zaire and the United Republic of Tanzania is deteriorating; notes increasing politicization and intimidation of refugees.

+ Tajik parties, meeting in Islamabad, agree to extend cease-fire for three months and to continue implementing confidence-building measures.

+ Deputy Special Representative for Cyprus holds informal talks with Cypriot leaders on implementation of confidence-building measures and overall settlement, Secretary-General reports.

+ Bosnian government army continues offensive in north-west Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bosnian Croat forces also engage Bosnian Serbs.

+ United Nations and CSCE to improve cooperation and coordination at all levels to make best use of resources, Secretary-General says.

+ Human Rights Committee begins adopting parts of draft general comment on reservations made by States regarding International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

+ Bengt Lindqvist appointed Special Rapporteur on implementation of Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

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For information media—not an official record

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today left Georgia for an official visit to Armenia, where he met with President Levon Ter-Petrossian. They discussed forthcoming United Nations conferences, including the 1995 World Summit for Social Development and the special General Assembly meeting to be held next October; the crisis in Nagorny Karabakh; and Armenian development issues.

Following his meeting with the Armenian President, the Secretary-General said he had no mission to be a mediator in relation to Nagorny Karabakh, as the Security Council had asked the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) to play such a role. However, he would need as much information as possible so that his next report might explain the situation and how it could be resolved. He believed there was an agreement in Baku and Yerevan that the problem would require a step-by-step approach, and that it was very important to maintain the existing cease-fire and to avoid any military confrontation between the parties.

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During his official visit to Georgia, which ended this morning, the Secretary-General had meetings with President Eduard Shevardnadze, government officials and Members of Parliament, and representatives of persons displaced due to the situation in Abkhazia. He reaffirmed that the Security Council resolutions and presidential statements on Abkhazia represented a legal and political basis for the solution of the problem there.

The Secretary-General stressed that the problem should be solved on the basis of United Nations principles: preserving the political independence and territorial integrity of States; guaranteeing the inviolability of international frontiers; the inadmissibility of acquisition of land by force; and implementing Council resolutions. Meanwhile, ways to speed up the repatriation of displaced persons should be considered.

He noted that Georgian/Abkhaz talks would resume in Geneva on 14 November under the aegis of Special Representative Edouard Brunner. Taking into account the results of those talks, he intended to invite President Shevardnadze, the Abkhaz leader Mr. Ardzinba, and a high-level Russian representative to a meeting in early December.

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Mozambique's first multiparty elections were conducted peacefully, in a well-organized manner, and without any major irregularities or incidents, according to a preliminary statement by Special Representative Aldo Ajello. He stressed that United Nations observation did not support any claim of fraud or intimidation, or any other patterns of incidents that could affect the credibility of the elections.

The turnout for the three-day elections was massive, and more than 90 per cent of the registered electorate voted in some provinces, Mr. Ajello noted. There was some confusion after the Mozambique National Resistance Movement

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(RENAMO) decided to withdraw from the elections on Thursday, but voting proceeded smoothly after that decision was reversed. He said that the counting of ballots was under way, and that the United Nations Observer Mission in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) would maintain its vigilance. Once the count was completed, he would be in a position to make an official pronouncement on the freedom and fairness of the entire electoral process.

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Special Representative Shahryar Khan has found that the security situation is deteriorating in Rwandese refugee camps in Zaire and the United Republic of Tanzania, according to a United Nations spokesman. He visited some camps yesterday, and reported increasing politicization and intimidation of refugees.

Mr. Khan will discuss the matter with the Secretary-General in Geneva early next week, the spokesman said. He will emphasize the need for emergency assistance for Rwanda, as opposed to humanitarian assistance, to support the functioning of the Government, the rebuilding of infrastructure and the re-establishment of communications.

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The Tajik parties have agreed to extend their cease-fire agreement for another three months until 6 February 1995, according to a note issued today at Headquarters. They took that action by signing a joint communiqué at the conclusion of the inter-Tajik talks in Islamabad yesterday. The parties also agreed to sign the protocol on the joint commission to monitor implementation of the agreement; to continue implementing confidence-building measures, including the release of detainees and prisoners of war; and to focus attention on the need to provide additional security guarantees to the civilian population of the Karategin Valley.

The parties confirmed that they would each simultaneously release 27 detainees and prisoners of war before Sunday, through the good offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). They also confirmed their commitment to settle the conflict personally, and agreed to hold the next round of talks in Moscow in early December.

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The leaders of the two Cypriot communities last month began a series of informal consultations with the Deputy Special Representative for Cyprus, Gustave Feissel, according to the Secretary-General. In a report to the Security Council dated 29 October, he said they were exploring concrete ways in which progress might be made regarding the implementation of the package of confidence-building measures and the overall settlement of the Cyprus problem.

In view of the fact that the consultations had begun and that his review of the situation was continuing, the Secretary-General said it was not appropriate at the present time to attempt a definitive report on his mission

of good offices in Cyprus. The Security Council's request for a fundamental and far-reaching reflection required discussion and analysis of a number of developments in recent months. He added that his representatives would continue their consultations with the parties and with others, and that he would keep the Council informed as necessary.

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The Bosnian Government's Fifth Army Corps has been continuing its offensive against the Bosnian Serbs in north-west Bosnia and Herzegovina, and pushing the confrontation line southward from the Bihac pocket, a United Nations spokesman said today. Bosnian Croat forces have reportedly been assisting the government offensive.

Fighting was also reported between Bosnian Government and Bosnian Serb forces on the southern side of the Mount Igman demilitarized zone near Sarajevo, the spokesman added. Meanwhile, the Government has been cooperating with the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in moving troops out of the zone, and only a small number now remain there.

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Specific efforts have been made by the United Nations and the CSCE to improve contacts and cooperation in the field, at the negotiating table and between the respective headquarters, according to the Secretary-General. In a report to the General Assembly dated 17 October, he said those links would be enhanced in order to make the best possible use of resources made available by Governments to the two organizations. The avoidance of duplication or overlapping mandates would facilitate cooperation and lead to effective coordination.

There was an informal understanding regarding the division of labour between the two organizations, the Secretary-General noted. The United Nations had retained the lead in peacemaking efforts in Tajikistan and Abkhazia, Georgia, while the CSCE had the lead in Nagorny Karabakh, Moldova and South Ossetia, Georgia. There was also close cooperation between UNPROFOR and the CSCE mission resident in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The Secretary-General went on to say that he had accepted an invitation to attend and address the Meeting of Heads of States of Government of States participating in the CSCE in Budapest on 5 and 6 December.

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The Human Rights Committee yesterday began to adopt parts of a draft general comment aimed at providing guidance on issues relating to reservations made by States on ratification or accession to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights or its Optional Protocols.

The general comment is necessary, according to the draft, because it is important for States parties to know exactly what obligations they have

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undertaken. In monitoring implementation of the Covenant and the Protocols, the Committee also has to know whether a State is bound, and to what extent, to a particular obligation. The Committee is concerned that the number, content and scope of reservations might undermine the Covenant's full implementation. The draft defines reservations and their role, and examines the international law on reservations as it applies to the Covenant. It also considers what specific rights may be the object of reservations.

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The Secretary-General has appointed Bengt Lindqvist, a Member of the Swedish Parliament, as Special Rapporteur on the implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. Mr. Lindqvist was Sweden's first blind cabinet Minister, having served as Minister of Social Affairs from 1985 to 1991.

The Standard Rules, which were adopted by the General Assembly last year, outline government responsibilities and provide guidance for action regarding the rights of people with disabilities. Although they are not compulsory, the Rules exert strong moral and political influence and can become international custom when applied by a sufficient number of States.

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